

THE INTRODUCTION OF A BIPARTISAN BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

**HON. BOB GOODLATTE**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2017*

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, as of today, the current debt of the United States is reaching almost \$20 trillion. The national debt per taxpayer is about \$166,800. For comparison, a recent report by the Census Bureau stated that median household income was just under \$57,000.

It's clear that we are in dire straits. The States understand the gravity of this issue and for decades have been enacting policies that align their own spending with debt. Indeed, 49 states have a balanced budget provision that applies to their own budget. Furthermore, 27 states have already called for a constitutional convention to consider a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

This Congress provides renewed opportunity for this body to consider such a provision. Given the difficult fiscal decisions that inevitably lie ahead, our actions must be grounded in commonsense policies that are constitutionally required. This amendment provides the necessary foundation.

This balanced budget amendment is the same language that passed the House with bipartisan support in 1995 and fell only one vote short in the Senate. It is the only balanced budget proposal to achieve the support of a majority of the Members of the House of Representatives. The amendment forces Congress to live within its means by ensuring that total federal spending does not exceed total revenues.

This amendment is identical to the balanced budget amendment considered in the House of Representatives in the 112th Congress, which received 261 bipartisan votes when it came to the House Floor. It requires that Congress not spend more than it receives in revenues. It also requires a true majority of each chamber to pass tax increases and a three-fifths majority to raise the debt limit. Last Congress, 110 cosponsors signed onto the resolution.

A strong majority of Americans support a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. After all, they know what it means to live by a budget and they rightfully expect the federal government to do the same. They are asking Congress to work together to ensure that this amendment, which is so critical to the future of our country, becomes a reality.

CELEBRATING WYNNEBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2017*

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Wynnebrook Elementary School, a public elementary school located in West Palm Beach, Florida, on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary. Principal Mrs. Suzanne Berry and

Assistant Principal Mr. Steve Collins, continue in the path of the outstanding educators that came before them over Wynnebrook Elementary's half century of existence. Impressively, Wynnebrook Elementary has had only five Principals since its start.

Currently, 876 students attend Wynnebrook. The student body is diverse with forty-six percent Hispanic, forty-three percent African American and nine percent White. Ninety-four percent of Wynnebrook students are on free or reduced price lunches and the school has received an "A" grade for 14 years in a row. It is ranked 19th among 124 elementary schools in the Palm Beach School District, with a 2016 calculated average standard test score of 86.92.

Wynnebrook has been the recipient of many awards. In 2011 and 2016, the school won the Exceeding Expectations Project Award from the East Coast Technical Assistance Center (ECTAC). Last year, Mr. Jeffrey Pegg, immediate past principal, won the 2016 Principal Leadership Award given by Florida TaxWatch.

Mr. Speaker, I am so very proud that Wynnebrook Elementary is located in my Congressional district. I am honored to recognize them on the House floor and congratulate all those who have made Wynnebrook Elementary such a wonderful school over the last 50 years. All principals, teachers, students and volunteers should not only be proud of the impressive work they are doing today, but also exceedingly proud of their storied history. I wish them many more years of continued success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BANKRUPTCY JUDGESHIP ACT OF 2017

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2017*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the "Bankruptcy Judgeship Act of 2017," authorizes 6 additional permanent bankruptcy judgeships and converts 16 temporary bankruptcy judgeships to permanent status, based on recommendation of the Judicial Conference of the United States. With respect to the 6 additional permanent bankruptcy judgeships, they are authorized pursuant to section 3 of the bill as follows: 2 for the District of Delaware; 2 for the Eastern District of Michigan; and 2 for the Middle District of Florida. With respect to the 16 conversions, they are authorized pursuant to section 2 of the bill for the following districts:

- 5 for the District of Delaware;
- 2 for the Southern District of Florida;
- 3 for the District of Maryland;
- 1 for the Eastern District of Michigan;
- 1 for the District of Nevada;
- 1 for the Eastern District of North Carolina;
- 2 for the District of Puerto Rico;
- 1 for the Western District of Tennessee; and
- 1 for the Eastern District of Virginia.

This legislation responds to a serious need. Since the last time additional bankruptcy judgeships were authorized, which was 10 years ago, the 6 districts that would be authorized additional judicial resources by this bill have experienced a 55 percent increase in weighted filings, according to the Judicial Conference.

All 16 of the temporary bankruptcy judgeships that the bill converts to permanent status

are set to lapse as of May 25, 2017. As the Conference observes, "These bankruptcy courts would face a serious and, in many cases, debilitating workload crisis if their temporary judgeships were to expire."

The need for these additional judicial resources is based on a comprehensive analysis performed by the Judicial Conference based on a formal survey of all judicial circuits conducted pursuant to section 152(b)(2) of title 28 of the United States Code. Criteria considered include the workload of each court, case filing statistics, and geographic factors, among other matters.

TRIBUTE TO HONOR FIRST RESPONDER JEFF SIMPSON FOR HIS SACRIFICE AND SERVICE TO OUR NATION

**HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 3, 2017*

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Jeff Simpson, a September 11 first responder who selflessly sacrificed his life aiding his fellow Americans. Jeff will be remembered for his compassion, his bravery, and his love of community and country.

Jeff was a fully certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and a member of the Dumfries Triangle Rescue Squad in Triangle, Virginia. Volunteering with the local ambulance on nights and weekends was Jeff's passion. His family and friends remember Jeff stopping to help others in highway accidents and listening to emergency calls in his down time to help his neighbors. Jeff never went anywhere without his "rescue bag" and would always sidetrack his plans to help someone in need.

Jeff worked for Oracle Corporation, and on September 11, 2001, was on assignment approximately five blocks from the World Trade Center. The sound of the first plane crashing into the North Tower caused the meeting Jeff was in to be cancelled and the building to be evacuated. After seeing the second plane hit the Second Tower, Jeff knew he had to help. A coworker remembers Jeff saying, "There is not a fire department in the world that can handle a situation like this, I'm going to help." Jeff was last seen running toward the North Tower.

Six months after the September 11 attacks, Jeff's remains were finally located at the structure. Jeff was with 12 other New York City Fire Department and New York Port Authority personnel where it is believed the group established a triage area to care for those who'd been injured in the attack.

Jeff Simpson's sacrifice and servant leadership led to him posthumously receiving one of the first Public Safety awards established by Governor Warner and to be recognized by the National Association of Rescue Squads in 2003. Rescue Station 23 in Prince William County was dedicated to Jeff Simpson in 2010 because of how well he lived out the creed, "We Serve to Save." On September 9th, 2016, the Town of Dumfries named their Community Center the Jeff Simpson Community and Cultural Arts Center in dedication to Jeff and in gratitude of his life and service to his community and country.

Today, I have the honor of remembering Jeff Simpson and celebrating his legacy. Jeff